

REMARKS

Claims 1-100 are pending. The Office action indicated claims 18-24, 32, 42-44, 56-58, 70-72, and 77-100 would be allowable if the Applicant overcomes the double patenting rejection and includes all of the limitations of the base claim and any intervening claims. Both suggestions are incorporated in this response. To advance prosecution of this case, a terminal disclaimer is attached and the limitations from the allowable claims are incorporated into the independent claims and a divisional application will be filed with the claims that are not indicated as allowable. Applicants respectfully traverse and request reconsideration.

Amended independent claim 1 now includes the limitations of claims 18, which was indicated as allowable if incorporated into independent claim 1 and thus should be allowed.

Amended independent claim 11 now includes the limitations of claim 32, which was indicated as allowable if incorporated into independent claim 11 and thus should be allowed.

Amended independent claims 33 and 38 now include the limitations of claim 42, which was indicated as allowable if incorporated into independent claim 38 and thus should be allowed.

Amended independent claims 47 and 52 now include the limitations of claim 56, which was indicated as allowable if incorporated into independent claim 52 and thus should be allowed.

Amended independent claims 61, 66, 75 and 76 now include the limitations of claim 70, which was indicated as allowable if incorporated into independent claim 67 and thus should be allowed.

Double Patenting

The Office Action rejects claims 1, 3-7, 9-12, 14-21, 25-29, 33, 35-39, 41-43, 45-47, 49-53, 55-57, 59-61, 63-67, 69-71 and 73-76 on the ground of non-statutory obvious-type double patenting over US Patent No. 6,691,380.

Claims 32 and 77-100 are rejected on the ground of non-statutory obvious-type double patenting over US Patent No. 6,691,380 in view of Smith (U.S. Patent No. 5,987,714).

The Office Action rejects claims 1, 3-7, 9-12, 14-21, 25-29, 33, 35-39, 41-43, 45-47, 49-53, 55-57, 59-61, 63-67, 69-71 and 73-76 on the ground of non-statutory obvious-type double patenting over US Patent No. 6,279,207.

Claims 32 and 77-100 are rejected on the ground of non-statutory obvious-type double patenting over US Patent No. 6,279,207 in view of Smith (U.S. Patent No. 5,987,714).

A terminal disclaimer is attached to overcome the non-statutory obvious-type double patenting rejection based on US Patent No. 6,279,207 for these claims only. Thus, the claims not rejected on the grounds of non-statutory obvious-type double patenting are not subject to the terminal disclaimer, including at least claims 2, 8, 13, 22, 23, 24, 30, 31, 34, 40, 44, 48, 54, 58, 62, and 68.

Claim Objections

The Office Action objects to claims 1, 47, and 75 due to the recitation of “the free end” and “the peak.” Claims 1, 47, and 75 are amended to remove the recitation of “the free end” and “the peak.” Thus, reconsideration and withdrawal of this rejection is requested.

Claim Rejections – 35 USC §102

The Office Action rejects claims 1, 3-7, 9-12, 14-17, 25-29, 33, 35-39, 41, 45-47, 49-53, 55, 59-61, 63-67, 69, and 73-76 under 35 U.S.C. § 102 as being anticipated based on US Patent No. 4,402,118 (Benedetti).

The Office Action rejects claims 1, 3-7, 10-12, 14-17, 25, 30, 31, 33, 35-39, 41, 47, 50, 52, 53, 55, 61, 63, 64, 66, 67, 69, 75 and 76 under 35 U.S.C. § 102(b) as being anticipated based on US Patent No. 6,928,705 (Osterland).

Applicants repeat the arguments made in the previous responses. Nevertheless, to advance prosecution of this case as described above, the limitations from the allowable claims are incorporated into the independent claims. As a result, the rejection is moot and should be withdrawn.

Claim Rejections – 35 USC §103

Claims 2, 8, 13, 34, 40, 48, 54, 62 and 68

The Office Action rejects claims 2, 8, 13, 34, 40, 48, 54, 62 and 68 under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) as being unpatentable based solely on (Benedetti). The Office Action acknowledges that Benedetti does not disclose where the gradually decreasing slope has the shape of an arch of 50 – 70 degrees and the arch has a radius of 0.03 to 0.05 mm and further does not disclose a relief opening in the vicinity of the bottom of the spring fastener. Applicants repeat the relevant arguments made in previous office actions. These dependent claims dependent on relevant independent claims 1, 33, 38, 47, 52, 61, and 66 adding further limitations and are thus also allowable for at least the reasons the independent claims are allowable. In view of the amendments to the independent claims to include the limitations from the claims indicated as allowable, reconsideration and withdrawal of the rejections is respectfully requested.

Regarding the dependent claims, the dependent claims depend on independent claims 1, 11, 33, 38, 47, 52, 61, 66, 75 and 76 adding further limitations and are thus also allowable for at least the reasons the independent claims are allowable. Reconsideration and withdrawal of the rejections is respectfully requested.

Applicants respectfully submit that now the claims are in condition for allowance, and an early Notice of Allowance is earnestly solicited. The Examiner is invited to telephone the below-listed attorney at 708-588-0948 to advance prosecution of this case.

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